

Evaluation of the Missouri Teacher Recruitment and Retention Grants Phase II Report: Executive Summary

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Prepared for:



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CTAC's staff is comprised of nationally recognized executives, educators, policy makers, researchers and organizers who have extensive experience working with city, county and state agencies, educational institutions, federal legislative bodies, not-for-profit organizations, philanthropic institutions and the private sector.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To recruit and retain effective and diverse teachers, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) awarded more than \$50 million in 2021–22, through the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Grants, to local education agencies (LEAs), educator preparation programs (EPPs), and community colleges (CCs). By supporting and learning from these efforts, DESE aims at creating an exemplary state system of educator recruitment and retention.

The Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) is conducting an independent, external evaluation of the implementation of the grants. The Phase I evaluation (Liang & Slotnik, 2022) focused on building an initial understanding of the strategies selected by LEAs, EPPs, and CCs. This Phase II evaluation examines the initial implementation and impact of the grants. Findings of this report assist DESE in identifying opportunities for providing more targeted support.

The following research questions (RQs) guide the Phase II evaluation:

- RQ1: What factors enhance or hinder the implementation of the teacher recruitment and retention grants?
- RQ2: What is the quality of implementation of the teacher recruitment and retention grants? What criteria are grantees using to measure quality of implementation?
- RQ3: What is the perceived initial impact of the grants on teacher recruitment and retention? How are grantees measuring impact?

Findings

LEA Teacher Recruitment (Grow Your Own) Grants

- LEA lead contacts believe teacher recruitment is essential or a high priority for their LEAs, and the local communities support their teacher recruitment efforts.
- Lead contacts indicate it is particularly difficult for their LEAs to recruit teachers in specific content areas and racially/ethnically diverse teachers.
- It is generally more difficult for LEAs in rural and urban areas than in suburban areas to recruit teachers.
- Since the grant began, some LEAs have made modifications to their teacher recruitment grant strategies.
- Where implementation has begun, LEA lead contacts are generally positive about the quality of their teacher recruitment grant efforts to-date.
- Half of lead contacts indicate their LEAs have started to collect the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of their teacher recruitment grants.
- Some LEA lead contacts are already seeing early indicators of success of their teacher recruitment grants.

- Most LEAs have not yet shared or reported on results to-date of their teacher recruitment grants with key stakeholders and/or DESE.

LEA Teacher Retention Grants

- LEA lead contacts believe teacher retention is essential or a high priority for their LEAs, and the local communities support their teacher retention efforts.
- Lead contacts indicate it is particularly difficult for their LEAs to retain teachers in specific content areas and racially/ethnically diverse teachers.
- It is generally more difficult for LEAs in rural and urban areas than in suburban areas to retain teachers.
- Since the grant began, some LEAs have made modifications to their teacher retention grant strategies.
- Where implementation has begun, LEA lead contacts are generally positive about the quality of their teacher retention grant efforts to-date.
- Half of lead contacts indicate their LEAs have started to collect the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of their teacher retention grants.
- Some lead contacts are already seeing early indicators of success of their teacher retention grants.
- Most LEAs have not yet shared or reported on results to-date of their teacher retention grants with key stakeholders and/or DESE.

EPP/CC Teacher Recruitment Grants

- Lead contacts believe teacher recruitment is essential or a high priority for their EPPs/CCs, and the local communities support their teacher recruitment efforts.
- Lead contacts indicate it is particularly difficult for their EPPs/CCs to recruit racially/ethnically diverse teacher candidates, and teacher candidates in specific content areas.
- Since the grant began, some EPPs/CCs have made modifications to their teacher recruitment grant strategies.
- Where implementation has begun, EPP/CC lead contacts are generally positive about the quality of their teacher recruitment grant efforts to-date.
- The majority of EPPs indicate they have started to collect the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of their teacher recruitment grants; most CCs indicate they have not started to do so.
- Some EPP/CC lead contacts are already seeing early indicators of success of their teacher recruitment grants.
- Most EPPs/CCs have not yet shared or reported on results to-date of their teacher recruitment grants with key stakeholders and/or DESE.

Recommendations

Lead contacts for LEAs, EPPs, and CCs indicate they understand the purpose of the teacher recruitment and retention grants. For nearly all grantees, teacher recruitment and/or retention is a high priority. There is commitment from the grantees and support from the local communities for Missouri's statewide initiative.

The following recommendations are intended to assist DESE in providing more targeted support to LEAs, EPPs, and CCs.

- Provide opportunities for grantees to share learnings and promising practices
- Provide additional guidance in the form of Frequently Asked Questions
- Conduct reviews to ensure the implementation of all grants is moving forward

Conclusion

LEAs, EPPs, and CCs across the state are generally showing commitment to the purposes of the teacher recruitment and retention grant initiative. Some lead contacts indicate they are already seeing early indicators of success. Moreover, the guidance and support to-date from DESE are valued by grantees. The grantees are now aiming for a full-year of implementation of the teacher recruitment and retention grants.